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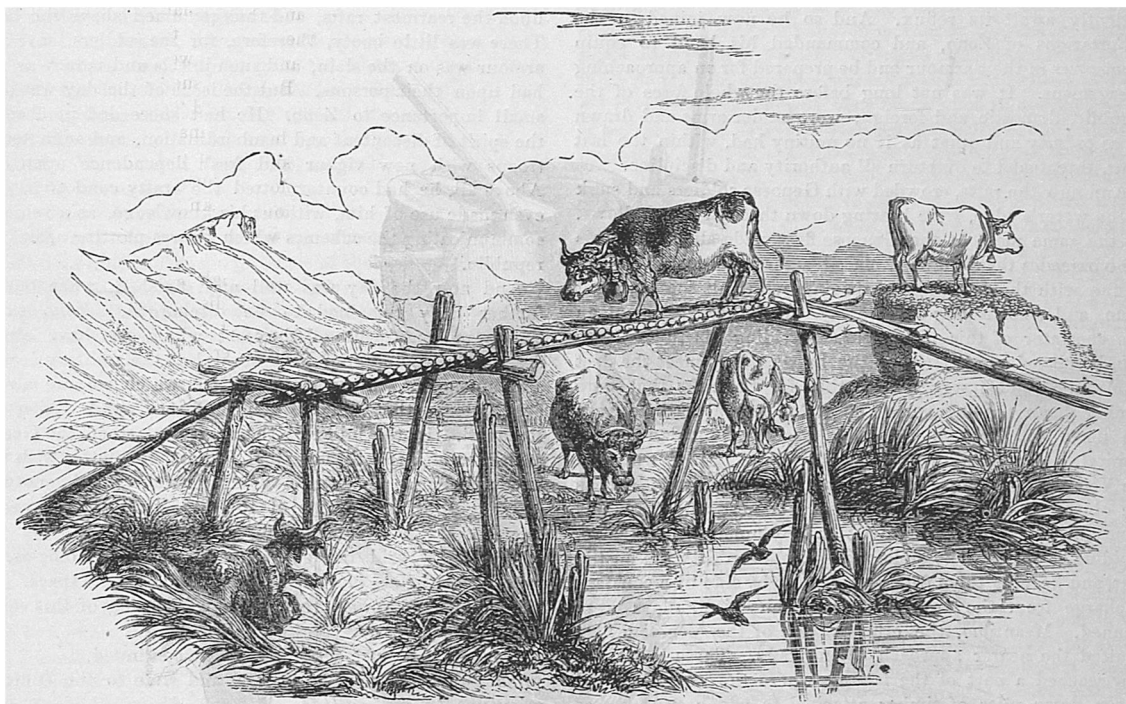
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where he has just left his family. He can still see the smoke issuing from the roof, and thinks how they will miss him at the frugal meal. But he proceeds on his way, and now the projections of the rocks shutting out these cherished objects from his view, he finds himself alone with his flocks among the grand and towering Alps.

The athletic man, represented on the opposite page, carries upon his broad shoulders his household furniture, holding in one hand his milk-pail, in the other a thick staff, pointed with iron, upon which he leans, and which would be a formidable weapon in his powerful hand. A large basket on his back contains his milk-strainer, some straw, a one-legged milking-stool, a cheese mould, the stand on which the cheeses are placed

to drain, and the great kettle in which the milk is collected, heated, and made into curds.

The Swiss herdsman's is, in reality, not so idle a life as it is often described to be; he has to collect eighty or ninety cows twice a day to be milked, many of which have often strayed away in different directions. Besides this he has to make the cheese, and keep all his utensils scrupulously clean. Hardy, robust, and indefatigable, inured to exposure from earliest childhood, his weather-beaten frame is indifferent to the vicissitudes of climate. He is wild, uncultivated, and ignorant of the usages of other people, but simple and uncontaminated by the vices, unfortunately, too common among the labouring population of most other districts.



PASTURES OF THE VALLEY OF MEYRINGEN.

THE DEAD BRIDAL.

A VENETIAN TALE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

BY JONATHAN FREKE SLINGSBY.

CHAPTER XI.

"Les lagunes offrirent alors le singulier spectacle d'une troupe se hasardant sur des barques construites avec des debris de maisons, et qu'on était obligé de soulever pour les faire passer par-dessus une enceinte de pieux; les Génois, tantôt dans l'eau, tantôt dans leur bateaux, et l'enfanterie de Zeno s'avancant dans ces marais pour les charger."—*Daru.*

"Come, bring forth the prisoners."—*Richard III.*

It was a spectacle worthy of the hand of a painter to commemorate, or of a historian to describe—that moment when Zeno directed the attention of the Venetian army to the strange flotilla moving slowly downwards from Chioggia. The cheers and shouting which a moment before ran along the camp were now hushed to the profoundest silence. The tumultuous mass of troops, partially armed, in all variety of costumes, and speaking in different dialects and tongues, surging like the waves of the sea when the wind drives them to and fro, were now motionless and mute as that sea in a summer calm. They gazed in speechless astonishment at this evidence of a sudden and desperate courage on the part of the Genoese, and felt that a deadly struggle was near at hand. The general felt that the crisis was at hand, and promptly and skilfully he availed himself of it.

"Look, soldiers," exclaimed Zeno, "while ye are wasting

your energies in causeless complaints, the prize of all our toils, that which should crown our patient perseverance, is about to escape from us. See, the Genoese are bearing away all their riches, the spoil which should soon have been yours by the right of war—the pillage which I would have given to you when we should enter Chioggia. But it is not yet too late. The admiral will aid us. See, he is ready." And pointing to where the Venetian fleet lay, he showed them Pisani steadily bearing down so as at the same time to intercept the vessels of the Genoese admiral, Muraffo, from forming a junction with the rafts, and to prevent the latter getting out of the lagunes.

The words of the general, added to the sight which the troops beheld, produced a change in the feelings of the soldiers as sudden as it was complete. They felt that if they now refused to act cordially under the command of the

republic, the Genoese would assuredly escape with their property and equipments. The approach, too, of the enemy aroused all their martial feelings, and a simultaneous hearty cheer burst from all sides; and cries of "To arms! to arms! Viva San Marco! viva la Signoria!" ran along the lines and rent the air. Zeno was not slow in seizing upon this favourable conjuncture, for he knew well how evanescent and uncertain is the enthusiasm of the masses; he, therefore, called upon the soldiery to arm themselves with all speed, and to be prepared at once to act under his command. Nor was he without assistance. The sagacious mind of Recanati at once perceived that the tide of popular feeling was completely turned, at least for the present; he, therefore, determined to affect to guide the current which he could not oppose, and patiently await its reflux. And so he now joined in the exhortations of Zeno, and commanded his band to equip themselves in their armour and be prepared for an approaching engagement. It was not long before the whole force of the republic, domestic and foreign, were under arms and drawn up as orderly and quiet as if no mutiny had, within the last hour, threatened to overturn all authority and discipline.

And now the rafts, crowded with Genoese soldiers and sunk to the water's edge, were bearing down through the shallows. At the same moment the Genoese fleet made all sail towards the barricades that had been placed across the mouth of the lagune with the intention of driving with full force against them, and so sweeping them away. But Pisani was not an idle spectator of this movement. Dividing his flotilla into two, he placed one portion at the barricades to meet the fleet of Muraffo, and reserved the other for the rafts that were coming down the lagune. The action commenced between the fleets of the two republics, each commanded by its admiral. In vain did the Genoese galleys bear down upon the Venetians—again and again they were repulsed; and as the object of Pisani was to protect the barricades from his enemy, he was contented to act merely upon the defensive, avoiding, as much as possible, a close collision with the hostile fleet, and keeping them from coming side by side by a constant discharge from the archers with which his galleys were manned. Meantime, the other portion of the Venetian fleet awaited the nearer approach of the rafts. These latter had now reached a part of the lagune, where the Venetians had driven down piles of timber attached to which were beams which floated across the water. In order to pass these the Genoese were forced to get off the rafts and stand in the shallows nearly up to their necks, while they endeavoured to lift the rafts over the floating barrier. With infinite toil they had now succeeded in forcing two or three of the lightest of the rafts beyond the beams, and still, to their surprise, their enemies looked on without an effort to check them. Another and another of those frail barks was freed, and the men springing from nearly all the others into the water, prepared for one simultaneous and decisive effort. Now was the moment for which the Venetians had waited. The land forces had moved down to the brink of the lagune, watching in silence and ill-restrained eagerness the progress of the enemy. The moment was now come when that restraint should be removed. Drawing his sword, Zeno waved it over his head, and crying out—"On comrades, on; follow me"—he plunged into the waters and was soon wading deeply through them. The cheers of a thousand voices promptly responded to his cry—"On, on! follow the general," was heard on all sides, and the troops dashed impetuously into the lagune and struggled onward to meet the foe.

While the land forces were thus occupied in this singular movement, Pisani's galleys bore down upon the ill-fated rafts. The collision was terrible, as the large, heavy galleys came crushing over the frail and ill-constructed floats, smashing through them as the ploughshare tears through the soil and breaks it in pieces. Many of them were sunk with drowning wretches clinging to the spars; those which had not yet passed the boom made all speed back towards Chioggia; but great numbers of the men were already disembarked, and with the courage of despair now fought their way onwards in

the water. It was at this crisis that the forces of Zeno reached their enemy. A terrible and a novel sight it was truly, to see land forces thus engaged in a species of sea-fight, standing not upon the decks of galleys, but mid-deep in the water. A silent, deadly struggle ensued; silent save when that silence was broken by the gurgle of some death-groan bubbling up through the water, or the splash of the wounded man as he fell down dying the double death of slaughter and drowning. At length victory declared in favour of the Venetians. The greater portion of the Genoese who had thus rashly deserted their rafts were slain, the residue of them contrived to struggle back and rejoined their companions, and ultimately regained Chioggia, with a considerable portion of their effects, which, fortunately for them, had been stowed upon the rearmost rafts, and thus remained above the boom. There was little booty, therefore, for the soldiers, save what armour was on the slain, and such jewels and money as they had upon their persons. But the issue of the day was of no small importance to Zeno. He had succeeded in checking the spirit of discontent and insubordination, and animated the troops with new vigour and fresh dependence upon him. Above all, he had counterplotted the crafty condottiere, and even made use of him, without his knowledge, as a vehicle of communicating the schemes which he was plotting against the republic.

And now the day was well nigh finished, when but one further duty remained to be discharged. Zeno sat in the large apartment of the fort which we have already described; around him were several of the military leaders, and amongst them some faces with which we are already acquainted—the Count Polani, Checco, and Roberto di Recanati. In the midst of the apartment stood the German arblasteer and the three Italian soldiers, the latter with their hands bound. It was a court-martial, which, notwithstanding the busy events of the day, Zeno did not neglect to call.

"Signori," said the general, addressing the officers, "I must crave the aid of your judgments for a short space. The affairs of the morning prevented my disposing of this matter sooner."

A moment's pause ensued, when he continued,

"Stand forth, good arblasteer, and state to the court thy grievance."

The big German, whose wrath had cooled down considerably since the morning, seemed but little desirous to prosecute the matter any further. Nevertheless, in his own defence, he was forced to detail the transactions which we have already related. When he had ended his story, he exclaimed with a rude good nature,

"Der teufel, general, I bear no malice, not I. Let yonder lance-man give me back what he won of me, and I am content."

"Dost hear what the German says, fellow?" asked the general of the Italian soldier. "Wilt thou do as he requires?"

The lance-man looked at his companions, and then replied,

"So please your excellency, I will."

"It is well," said Zeno. "Thou doest voluntarily that which, hadst thou refused, thou shouldst have been compelled to do. So much for the matter between thee and this German. Now for that which is of graver import. Messires, I crave your attention."

Zeno then detailed to those whom he had summoned, the tumultuous scene of the morning, the immediate cause of which was the complaints of the three men of Recanati's band, and their demand for increased pay. When he had ended the statement, he asked,

"And now, Messires, is not this a plain violation of the allegiance which the soldier owes to the state that pays him? What say you?"

There was but one whose voice was not heard in affirmation of Zeno's question. To that one Zeno now turned, and said,

"Sir Roberto di Recanati, I would have your judgment in this matter, as the captain of these men. Perhaps I am

justified, by your silence, in holding that you concur with all those present?"

The condottiere bowed slightly, as if implying an assent which he dared not withhold; but Zeno still looked at him as if demanding a more unequivocal expression of his opinion. The condottiere was therefore forced to speak out.

"I do not dissent from the opinion of the court: the matter is as you say, signore, too plain to admit of dissent. Methinks, however, it might have been safely left to their own chief to deal with these offenders, as I would assuredly have done after I had aided in suppressing, for the time, the discontents which somehow manifest themselves amongst the troops but too often of late."

The look and tone with which these words were uttered did not escape the observation of Zeno; nevertheless, he seemed not to notice them, but continued,

"Well then, signori, the opinion of the court is unanimous, that these three men, belonging to the lances under the command of Sir Roberto di Recanati, have been guilty of mutinous language, and of having excited the troops to revolt against the republic. And now for the punishment to be awarded. With that I shall charge myself. Is the provost-marshal in attendance?"

The officer referred to stepped forward.

"Lead forth these men to the quarters of Sir Roberto di Recanati's band, and in the presence of their companions—for I shall look to you, Sir Roberto, that your troops are turned out—proclaim that they have been found guilty by their own captain and this whole council, of having excited the mutinous tumult of this morning, and then declare the sentence which the state awards—the loss of the right hand. And add that which thou findest written herein." So saying, Zeno wrote a few lines which he folded and delivered to the provost-marshal. The culprits were immediately removed, and the court rose.

"Aye, let it be so," muttered Recanati to himself, as he made his way to his quarters. "Fool that thou art! I will indeed do thy will in this matter. Ha! thou seest not how thou art playing my game. When thy provost-marshal chops off the hands of these three poor catiffs, he shall have done more to forward my plans and to make the troops disaffected than I could have accomplished in days of plotting."

And the condottiere smiled and compressed his thin lips, and pursued his way homewards.

The troops of Recanati were drawn out in front of the fort, awaiting in silence the scene that was about to be presented to them. Many, too, of the other mercenaries were present, and amongst them a number of the English archers of Sir William Cheke. Whether the appearance of these latter was casual or the result of some precautionary arrangement of Zeno's we shall not say. And now the three prisoners were led in front of the soldiery, bound and guarded by the men of the provost-marshal. This officer proceeded deliberately to state the crime of which the men had been found guilty, and then said in a loud voice—

"Hear the sentence which the state awards—that each of these men shall lose his right hand! . . . But," he continued, reading from a scroll in his hand, during the breathless silence (a silence which Recanati knew was like the lull which precedes the whirlwind on a sultry day in summer), "the most Serene Republic, through her generalissimo, remits the punishment in consideration of the alacrity with which the soldiers returned to their duty and the bravery with which they fought to-day."

The effect of this unexpected pardon was electrical. Shouts rent the sky as the liberated men joined their comrades. "Viva Zeno! Viva il generale! Viva la Signoria!" resounded on every side; and one could scarce credit that they who now uttered these acclamations were the same fierce soldiery who, a few hours before, had assailed the same general with threats and intimidation. The dark eyes of the condottiere glittered with malignant passion at an issue so utterly different from

that which he had confidently calculated upon. Clenching his hands with suppressed rage, he said hissing—

"Sacro Diavolo! che cosa sciagurata! Who could have foreseen such an issue? Well, well, the wind takes many a turn; who knows how soon this breeze may chop about and blow from the opposite quarter? And then—aye, then—let our generalissimo look to himself. In the meantime pazienza."

CHAPTER XII.

King Henry. What tumult's this?

Warwick. An uproar, I dare warrant,
Begun through malice.

Shakespeare.

AND how passed the days with Bianca and Giulio while we have been occupied with the war at Palestrina? You remember—so at least would we hope—how that at the end of Spring-tide we left them in Venice. After the sudden departure of the *Sieur de la Mole*, the intercourse between the maiden and her old playmate was renewed very much upon its former footing of by-gone days. The girl analysed her feelings, and pondered upon them, and so she knew and acknowledged to her own heart that she loved. The young man took not his heart to task; he cared not to define the nature of his feelings, happy in this, that he felt they were ministering to him delights, stronger, and tenderer, and fresher than the converse of woman had ever brought to him before. Daily his thoughts turned to the same object; daily his feet led him to the same presence. Enjoying the present, unheeding the future, the relations which had so long subsisted between him and his father's ward justified his warmest words and acts, while they caused him not to consider, perhaps not even to suspect, how far he was tampering with the most precious affections of another. Alas! this is a passage in the heart-history of our species too common to excite surprise. How often are the warm aspirations of human love drawn out from the heart and upwards to the beloved one by a warmth bright indeed, but yet not enduring—the admiration which is mistaken for passion—and then the light and the heat pass away, and the evening comes, and those aspirations exhaled from the heart fall back again upon it, like cold dew upon the earth, and turn into tears. "Amor che a nullo amato amar perdona," wrote the great Florentine—and he puts the sentiment into the mouth of woman;—with her we believe the proverbial paraphrase of the Italian sentiment, "Love begets love," is oftener a truth than with man.

Well, be this as it may, after a few weeks of such intercourse, a message from the Count Polani summoned the young man to join him at Palestrina. It aroused Giulio from his pleasant dream, somewhat as suddenly as a splash of cold water awakes a heavy sleeper. Perhaps, too, the shock was as good for him. He began to reflect that it was scarce becoming his manhood or his noble name to linger in the city, while so many of his peers were with the troops elsewhere. And so with a blush for his past neglect of duty, and a sigh over the pleasant hours that were now to be brought to a close, he communicated to Bianca that the next day he was to leave Venice and join his father. And that day passed as the other days had lately passed, marked, it might be, by a sense of sadness that cast its shadow over Bianca's brow, and left not Giulio's face undarkened. But it passed, and passed quickly, too; and the young man has bidden his last farewell, and touched the lips of his sister-friend, and they have parted. He to mingle again in the stirring scenes of life, and give his heart and his thoughts to things that energise and brace the spirit. She to the solitude and contemplation of that habitual seclusion which had been disturbed for a short space—even as a lake is troubled by the passing breeze, and then smooths its surface that it may reflect all the more faithfully the image of the heaven that has looked down upon it.

And thus did these young people part for the second time in their lives, each loving the other, yet neither having sought or made an avowal of that love to the beloved. We believe that this is more frequently the case in real life, especially

amongst the young, than writers of romance are disposed to allow. In the earlier days of such intercourse, the heart is too much engrossed with feeling to need that the lips should avow what it feels. Love seeks to enjoy its own passion, rather than to declare that enjoyment in the formality of words. And yet when the hour of parting came, a strong desire impelled Giulio to declare all he felt, and to learn from Bianca how far his own feelings were reciprocated; but an indefinable feeling, half fear, half reserve, repressed the words that were trembling on his lips, and he went forth as the shadows of evening were falling around, with his secret still undivulged, and the strong hope that a few short months, perhaps weeks, would restore him to the same happy intercourse which was now interrupted. With the morning's light Giulio was on his way to Palestrina, very much to the dissatisfaction of his mercurial valet, Tomaso, who contrived to make himself especially happy in the discharge of those gallantries which he had learnt to consider as at once the duty and the privilege of a travelled servitor such as he was. It must, however, be admitted that good old Guidetta felt by no means a corresponding discontent at the departure of the man as of the master, inasmuch as she had found it no easy matter to maintain of late that sobriety of demeanour amongst the young serving maidens of the establishment which an old woman is somehow usually disposed to exact from the younger of her own sex.

Meantime no tidings whatever of his friend Jacques de la Mole reached Giulio. At first he awaited with anxiety for some letter, or other explanation of his sudden disappearance, but none came. By degrees the engrossment of other thoughts superseded the recollection of their brief meeting, and after a few months Giulio had almost forgotten that it had taken place.

Let us now return to the camp at Palestrina, and follow the progress of the war.

The disastrous issue of the desperate attempt to escape from Chioggia made by the Genoese but aggravated the sufferings of the besieged. The hope of an honourable escape, which hitherto had sustained them, was now utterly annihilated, and to their despair was added the horrors of famine. All their supplies of food were exhausted,—then came a want more terrible still than even that of food, the water failed them. Within Chioggia itself there were no wells or springs of fresh water; the salt lagunes flowed all around, and access to the Brenta and the mainland, from which supplies were ordinarily procured, was entirely intercepted. And thus it is related by faithful historians, that after all their stock of grain and animal provision was consumed, and their scanty allowance of fresh water was exhausted, the soldiers were reduced to the necessity of boiling down, in brackish water, skins and even such pieces of old leather as they could procure, for the purpose of sustaining life.

Zeno foresaw all this with his usual penetration: he saw, too, that such a state of things could not possibly last, and that ere long the Genoese would be forced to surrender unconditionally, and thus justify to the world the wisdom and success of the general's plan of operation.

And so indeed it turned out. In a few days after the engagement which we detailed in the preceding chapter, a flag of truce was seen approaching the western redoubt, accompanied by deputies from the Genoese. These latter were conducted to the fortress of Palestrina, and were received by the Venetian general, who had hastily summoned the doge and the principal senators to receive them. When they were brought into the presence of the council of state, the deputies laid before the assembly the terms which they were commissioned to make on the part of the besieged. The condition of the Genoese was indeed sadly changed from that which they exhibited when as conquerors, scarce a year before, they approached the city of Venice, and haughtily refused all terms of accommodation from the republic, and threatened to bridle the horses of St. Mark.

"Noble Signori of Venice," said the spokesman of the deputation; "we come as honourable enemies, and sue for

peace from an honourable foe. If Genoa has warred with Venice, she has ever done so without violating the laws of war or of humanity. If we have struggled with you for empire, we have never sought to exterminate your people. We have, with a bravery which a generous enemy should appreciate, maintained the defence of Chioggia during many months, and we claim now at your hands that instead of vengeance you should recognise our devotion to the interests of our own republic, and esteem us as the citizens of so renowned and warlike a state as Venice should esteem a brave enemy. Reduced by famine, we seek to terminate a contest which we can no longer sustain. Let us hope to find in Venice that moderation in success which the memory of her own sufferings and of the inconstancy of fortune should induce. It is no longer a question of riches or booty; we abandon our stores, our armament, all, to our conquerors—we ask but to leave Chioggia—as soldiers, with our arms; as men, with our liberties and our lives."

It was an affecting scene, and the generous heart of Zeno was not untouched by the appeal of soldiers to a soldier. But whatever might be his own disposition, he felt it would be imprudent to give expression to it. The doge Contarini for a few moments held consultation with the principal senators in low and earnest tones, and Zeno sought not to control or influence their deliberations, satisfied that he had heretofore, in all the weightier concerns of the war, exercised his authority as generalissimo, when the interests of the state required that he should oppose those whose authority was never to be thwarted on light grounds. At length the doge replied to the Genoese ambassadors:—

"The Republic of Venice have considered the request of the deputies from the Genoese besieged in Chioggia. They who have unjustly invaded the territory of Saint Mark, have little claim to her mercy when they have failed in their unjust aggression. Tell those who have sent you hither that we make no terms with the vanquished. Let them surrender at discretion and unconditionally, and the serene republic will then deliberate upon the question of life or death with the wisdom and the generosity which ever govern her councils."

The doge then waved his hand, and the deputies were led from the council chamber.

No sooner had they passed from without the walls of the fort, than Zeno left the chamber, and passing speedily to his own apartment, found two persons already there, as if awaiting him.

"Ah! my faithful knight, thou hast had my summons, though the time was somewhat scant for apprising thee. Who have we here?"

"So please your excellency, he is an acquaintance. Roger Harrington, one of my archers—the same who attended you on a former occasion."

"Nay, I remember it well, and am right glad thou hast brought him, Sir William. I have good reason to suspect that the ambassadors of Genoa, who have failed in their mission to the republic, will attempt to enlist the mercenaries in their favour. If my secret information be not incorrect, they meant to offer them possession of Chioggia, with the entire of the stores, treasures, and even their arms, provided they are guaranteed their lives and a safe conduct to their fleet, which lies waiting out at sea. You will, therefore, speedily assemble your archers, and see the deputies beyond the entrenchments. And take good heed that they communicate with no one on their way. If force be necessary to insure this, you must even do so by force; but if possible I would avoid extremities. Should any unforeseen emergency arise, thou wilt apprise me of it without a moment's delay. This stout yeoman will find me here in readiness. Take this ring, good fellow, 'twill procure thee access to me at all times."

The burly archer took the ring which the general handed to him, and the knight and Hodge o' the Hill saluted Zeno, and hastened away upon the duty confided to them.

Hastily repairing to his quarters, Sir William Cheke put himself at the head of a company of his archers, and came up

in a few moments with the deputies from Chioggia. At the end of the redoubt, of which we have so often spoken, Cheke perceived that considerable bodies of the different mercenaries were collected, but whether merely to gratify their curiosity upon the subject of the recent interview of the ambassadors with the senate, or for other purposes, the English knight knew not. Interposing, however, his own band between the deputies and the troops, he signified to the former briefly, but peremptorily, that it was the order of the republic that he should see them safely beyond the precincts. The communication, though couched in terms of courtesy and respect, was too plainly a mandate to be declined, and accordingly the English company formed a guard of honour around the Genoese, and left them not till they were far on their way in the vessel that had brought them from Chioggia.

As Sir William Cheke and his company of archers were on their return, they again found the mercenaries standing in groups along the redoubt. It was evident from the earnest gesticulations of the men, that some exciting topic was at present under discussion amongst them. He was now within hearing of a knot of some dozen of men gathered around two speakers who were apparently in dispute. "Der Teufel," said a huge man-at-arms, whom Sir William at once recognised as the German who had been plundered by the Italians, "Der Teufel! How dost thou know that? Where is thy proof?"

"Proof! proof," retorted the other, an Italian lancer. "Oh dio! che sei pazzarello! What proof dost thou want, fool that thou art? Would'st expect that the senate or the general would proclaim their intrigues by a herald. I tell thee there is enough to convince any man with an eye in his face or an ear on his head, that the Lion of San Marco is determined to have, as usual, the lion's share, and to leave us, brave companions, who have fought their battles and served their city, just the dog's share. Ha! ha! after the noble beast has lapped up the blood, and devoured the flesh, he will leave us curs the bare bones to satisfy our hunger. What think ye of that, comrades?"

"Un ingiustizia! un infamita!" cried several voices, in answer to the appeal of their companion in arms.

"Aye," continued the other, "it is a wrong and a disgrace, which is not to be submitted to, brothers. Vi fanno il diavolo a quattrò. I tell thee they are going to play the very devil there yonder," and he pointed to the fort where the council had been sitting. "These deputies have made their terms with the doge. The Genoese are to surrender up Chioggia by night to the Venetian admiral, who is secretly to convey away in his galleys all the treasure and spoil; and then the gates are to be thrown open, and the empty houses are to be our share of the booty."

Again the voices of his auditors were raised in loud and angry comments, but the German seemed not yet convinced.

"Thou must vouch thy tale, comrade, by something more than thy own tongue before I'll believe it. I tell thee more, the noble Zeno is not the one to go back of his promise or defraud the soldiery of their lawful booty."

"Siete un benedetto uomo! Thou art a blessed fellow truly! What, dost think because he made a poor rogue restore thee thy zecchini, that he can stop rich rogues, like yon senators, from defrauding us of florins and crown pieces?"

"Giusto! giustamente hai ragione!" cried out his abettors in responsive chorus.

"Well," said the German, "here comes one who should know more of this matter than thou or I, comrade. Let us ask the English capitano who came from the council with the deputies."

"Aye, per bacco," said another of the lancers, "that's a shrewd thought of thine, Wilhelm. Aye, by all means let us ask the English capitano."

By this time Sir William Cheke stood amongst the group of soldiers, and looking towards the principal speaker, with a cheery voice he said—

"How now, my masters, what news to-day? Che nuove?"

"Che nuove, capitano," said the lancer, taking up the question. "I'faith that's just what we want to be certified of. Will you be pleased to enlighten us?"

"On what point, comrade?"

"Marry, upon this point, signore. Whether the council of state yonder have made terms with the Genoese, without the knowledge of the leaders of the free companies?"

"My good friend," replied the knight, "I was not of the council, and so I cannot know what they have decided upon."

"That is true, sir capitano. But though you were not of the council, yet you may have heard of their decision, doubtless."

"By St. George, friend," retorted Cheke, somewhat sharply, "I pry not into matters that concern me not. When the state whose pay we receive, and whom we are bound as honourable soldiers to serve, thinks fit to disclose their councils, they will, I suppose, do so. Meantime, as I am but an indifferent gossip, I have not even heard what common rumour may say; and if I had, I should not be disposed to give much heed to it."

"Well, then, signore, if there be any truth in the rumour, it behoves us all to take good heed to it. Cospetto, it will be too late when the republic has out-witted us."

"How dost thou mean?" asked the Englishman.

"Why, marry, I mean this," replied the soldier, and he forthwith proceeded to repeat the report with sundry exciting comments to the soldiery around him, the number of whom was greatly increased when it was perceived that the band of Sir William Cheke had stopped amongst them, and that some communication was going on between them. And, in truth, the words of the soldier fell amongst hearers as excitable and explosive as could be well imagined—men, who were already prepared by the rumours that Recanati, through his agents, of whom this soldier of his own band was one, had insidiously and industriously spread far and wide through the camp. The spark was now applied, and as the flame runs along dry stubble, so the word spread all through the free companies that Chioggia was about to be surrendered to the Venetians, and the Genoese treasure to be protected from the army. It was to no purpose that Sir William Cheke endeavoured to check the growing tumult. In vain he assured the troops that they had no just ground for believing the reports, and exhorted them to seek from the general or the senators the confirmation or refutation of the story before they committed any act of violence or insubordination. A cry, with whom originating no one could say, ran through the now dense masses of men—

"To arms, to arms!" In a moment those who were not accoutred rushed to their barracks and snatched up their weapons, while such of them as had arms remained on the spot. In an incredibly short time the bands were re-assembled, and now several of the leaders might be seen amongst them.

"To Chioggia! to Chioggia!" was now heard amid the tumult of voices and the rush of feet; and forward the mass hurried, heedless how they were to effect a landing at that port.

Meantime the English knight had not forgotten his duty to the republic or his promise to Zeno. When the cry to arms was first raised, he spoke in a hurried whisper to our old friend Hodge o' the Hill, whereupon that trusty bowman slipped away and disappeared from the company.

All this time the band of English archers were true to their allegiance, and stood firmly and unmoving. And now the various bands of condottieri, Italians, Germans, French, and Gascons, swept past them, cleared the redoubt, and were hasting forward to the edge of the lagune that flowed between them and Chioggia. Now, however, they paused to consider for the first time, by what means they were to proceed. Some counselled that they should wade through the lagune, alleging that it was easily fordable now that the tide chanced to be low; others hesitated, and proposed that the troops should sieze upon some boats that lay near, and by degrees pass over in them. While they were thus deliberating and inactive, a

cheer was heard from behind them, and Zeno, accompanied by the principal senators, were seen hurrying forward. In a moment the general threw himself amongst the insurgents with that reckless daring which formed so remarkable a trait of his character.

"Soldiers," cried he, "why do I see you thus in arms without my orders? Whither are you going? What are you doing?"

The promptness and energy of Zeno surprised and checked the soldiers in the very critical moment. The foremost and loudest shrank back instinctively reverencing the bravery of a man who seemed to bear a charmed life, whose spirit seemed to control the haughtiest and the proudest.

"Who are they who lead this movement?" he continued, taking advantage of the momentary calm. "I call upon them to come forward."

One or two of the captains now advanced.

"Noble general," said the foremost. "We are in arms to assert our own rights which your state has neglected. We go to share the spoil, which, by the right of warfare, is ours as well as the republic's."

"Who denies your right to share it?" asked Zeno.

"The council of your senators who have capitulated with the deputies that have just left the camp."

"Who dares assert that? Where is his proof? Let him come forward."

"Ah! der Teufel!" muttered the German man-at-arms to his neighbour, "that's just what I wanted to know too. Aha! the proofs, mein camarad."

As might be expected, no one could do more than rely upon the general rumour.

"It is in every man's mouth—let the council contradict it if they can."

An angry reply was rising to the lips of Zeno, but one of the Council of Ten—the member whom we already made acquaintance with—stood beside him and plucked his sleeve. The admonition was not lost on Zeno.

"It is false," said he, "no matter whose the mouth that

utters it. Eccellenza," he added, turning to the senator, "thou canst answer for the council."

"I can, assuredly," said the member of the *Neri*. "His highness the doge, with the advice of myself and the others of his council, have rejected all terms offered by the deputies from Chioggia."

The effect of this announcement was manifest amongst the soldiers. Zeno followed it up:—

"Soldiers, you have been betrayed and duped by some base agents and for base purposes. Think you, when the besieged are in the last extremity, we should be the fools to discuss terms with them. Return to your duty, and await the hour, not far distant, when Chioggia shall fall into our hands without a blow. I promise on the part of the most serene republic, I promise on the faith of a soldier, which never yet have I broken, that the troops, without distinction, shall be allowed three days' pillage of the town, and shall receive one month's additional pay."

The senators present with one voice confirmed the promise of the general. The mercenaries once again seemed contented. Gradually the bands dispersed to their respective quarters. The senators betook themselves again to their schemes of policy, their intrigues, and their jealous vigilance of Zeno; and the general pondered bitterly as he threw himself on a seat for a short repose after the exciting scene.

"Alas!"—such were his musings—"how deplorable is the position of a general whose soldiers are mercenaries, such as those I command. Never for a moment safe from the plots or the defection of his own troops no more than he is from the enemy without. He is environed with as many perils in his own camp as he is in the midst of the battle-field. He knows not the hour that his treacherous friends will range themselves amongst his enemies. Well, well, it cannot last long. Patienza! a few weeks—nay, most likely a few days—will secure the prize for which I have been working and watching day and night for many a weary month. And then, aye, and then, I shall be strong enough to grapple with secret foe as with open enemy. Meantime, patienza!"

THE COLUMN OF JULY.

THE column of July occupies the site of the bastion of the Bastille. It was erected shortly after the accession of Louis Philippe to the French throne, and at its foot were buried the remains of those who fell in the struggle for freedom during the three days of July. The pillar is covered with the gilded names of those who perished, and is surmounted by a statue in commemoration of the triumph of their cause.

The chief interest attaching to the column arises from its locality, and as we cross the broad open square where it is situated, in the way to Père la Chaise, thoughts of the strong fortress, which once arose upon that spot, are naturally suggested, and the Column of July awakens the memory of the Bastille and all that was said about or done within that secret prison-house. Gay groups are round that pillar, and all is bustle and activity; the old aspect of the place has quite departed, but no change can blot out the recollection of the Bastille, or of those who entered there and left hope behind.

Five hundred years ago, when the French and English were playing the old game of war, the inhabitants of Paris, fearing the approach of those "good yeomen, whose limbs were made in England," determined to repair the fortifications of their city, and appointed one Stephen Marcel, a provost and merchant, to undertake the task. He obtained great popularity by the erection of a strong fortress at the eastern extremity of the city, but unhappily, in an attempt to favour the pretensions of one whom the citizens despised, he was knocked on the head, and butchered at the foot of his own Bastille. To have anything to do with this building seems to have been peculiarly unfortunate, for Hugh Aubriot, who added to the construction, fell under the displeasure of his

master, the king, and was the first offender confined within the Bastille. Towards the close of the fourteenth century, the building assumed its final aspect. Charles VI. added four towers, and gave it a parallelogram form. Its walls were nine feet thick; it boasted eight towers, each a hundred feet high, four looking on the city, and four on the suburb of St. Antoine. It was surrounded by a ditch one hundred and twenty feet wide, and twenty-five feet deep. Each particular tower derived its name, either from some historical event, or from the most distinguished prisoners it had at any time contained. The unfortunate Count de St. Pol, who was imprisoned within the fortress previously to his execution, gave the name to the Tour de la Comté. Sully, in the days of the good Henry, deposited vast treasures in one tower of the stronghold, and it was henceforth called the Tower of the Treasure. The Tower of Liberty would seem to be a mockery and a jest; yet the Tower of the Corner was so called, on account of its position; and the Tower de la Bazinière, from a prisoner of that name.

So, with its strong walls, and wide moat, and eight towers, the Bastille became a military defence and a state prison at an early period of French history—the scene of constant suffering and injustice never heard of beyond the prison walls. There the prelate D'Harancourt was confined in a massive cage, and pined away fifteen years; there the innocent Armagnac was shut up in a close dungeon till he lost the consciousness of his unhappiness in idiocy. There the Duke de Nemours lingered, and heard no news but that he was to die, and saw not the light till they led him forth to execution, and in their wanton cruelty placed his little ones below the scaffold, that their father's blood might fall upon them. There, hunted